

An Interview with James Witt Dougherty

INTERVIEWERS COPY

I: Good afternoon, Mr. Dougherty, it is good of you to come for this interview.

D: Thank you. It has been a long time since I have been interviewed by anyone. I'm anxious to share my life with you.

I: To begin, Mr. Dougherty, where did you come from any why did you decide to settle in Dublin?

D: Well, originally I came from Tennessee. Before living in Tennessee I lived in Mississippi. I hopped around a lot. In 1852, I guess, I can't remember dates too well; I boarded the ship Humboldt from New Orleans and came around the horn to San Francisco.

I: Around the horn! Wow! That was a long trip. Do you remember anything about the trip?

D: I sure do! It took several months for the journey. I can remember day after day seeing nothing but water and more water. I became restless after a while wondering if I had made the right decision. Some of the storms were rough, too! There were many times when I wondered if we were going to make it.

I: How did people react to the trip?

D: Sometimes there was fighting and lots of arguing. It was great to finally see the San Francisco Bay. The hills were so beautiful. I knew that it was worth it. From San Francisco I went by stage to Sacramento.

I: Didn't you go back to Tennessee?

D: I sure did! I told you I traveled a lot! After a year I went back to get some of my friends to come out west. Then I returned to Sacramento for a while.

I: Were you married at this time?

D: I sure was, but my wife stayed in Tennessee. Later on she joined me in Sacramento. I then sold my business and we moved to the Dublin area.

I: Why did you decide on the Dublin area to live?

D: Easy decision, the land was available since Amador needed money. The land was good for farming and the view in the valley was fantastic. At that time there was plenty of water around.

I: You bought land from Amador then?

D: You bet. 10,000 acres to be exact. I had to pay plenty for it. That deal cost me \$22,000 dollars. This seems like a lot of money, but it was less than Fallon and Murray paid for their land. Amador was desperate.

I: Is that all you bought?

D: Heavens no. I kept buying more and more land until I had almost as much as the railroad baron Mr. Charles McLaughlin. That McLaughlin had more land than I did so I had to be happy with being second best.

I: Where was your land?

D: Well, I had the best deal. My land was mostly on the flat areas of the valley. McLaughlin's land was in the hills. Mine was definitely better for farming.

I: Where did you get all of the money needed to buy the land?

D: I had a partner. Actually, two men helped finance the venture. The first man was William Glaskin. Later he ran into financial trouble and he had to sell. Samuel B. Martin bought the part that Glaskin had. When I die I will leave my entire estate to my son, Martin A. Dougherty.

I: Where did you live when you moved here?

D: Remember the Amador adobe? It was a beautiful place. Lots of rooms. The view from the upper floor was fantastic. I lived in it for about 10 years. Then we had an earthquake of 1863. It was completely wrecked. It was terrible. The adobe was built so well. But after so many years I guess it couldn't stand the shaking.

I: What did you then?

D: Well, I built a frame building. It was not as large, but it was a mansion, to be sure. My wife liked it though!

I: You were quite well known in this area, weren't you?

D: I guess so. After I built the hotel, lots of people came to Dublin on the way to Sacramento and San Jose. It was more of an inn than a hotel, though. What really made me famous was the fact that when the post office was established here it was named after me. They called it Dougherty's Station.

I: When did it all happen?

D: The post office was established on February 15, 1860. It was called Dougherty's Station until 1896 when the name was shortened to Dougherty. That name stuck until February 29, 1908, when it was changed to Dublin. I was sorry that this happened. I would have liked to have them continue my name, but who wouldn't right?

I: Where was the inn located?

D: By the time I came here, Green's store was being built. I built the inn right across the street from it. I guess that you could call this area the center of town. It was near St. Raymond's Church. It was near the Murray house as well as my own house.

I: what did you do with all of your land? Was there enough money in the inn business to live?

D: The inn was certainly prosperous, but not enough to pay the taxes on my land. I rented property to others who raised wheat on it. Robert Livermore did this too, and it was quite successful so others wanted to try it.

I: How did you like life here?

D: I loved living life in this valley. In fact I never moved again. I have a place picked out in St. Raymond's cemetery so that I can be in this valley forever.

I: How would you like to be remembered by the people who come after you?

D: I would like to have some landmark named after me like a road or school, etc. I'd like to be remembered as a person who helped to establish a thriving town here and one who contributed to the growth of a community.

I: This will end our interview now. I certainly want to thank you for your time today.

D: You are welcome. The next time that you come through on your way to Sacramento please stop at the inn for a visit. I promise you the best room in the house!

I: I certainly will. Thanks again!

D: So long!

I: Good-bye!

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I: I certainly will. Thanks again!

D: So long!

I: Good-bye!

Notes on Interview with James Witt Dougherty

Directions: As you listen to the interview between James W. Dougherty and the interviewer, take notes in the following sections. When the interview is over, use your notes to write an article about James Witt Dougherty. Pretend you are going to publish it in the first *Dublin Gazette* in 1899. You may draw an illustration to go along with the article you wrote.

1. Life before coming to Dublin area
2. Getting land in this valley
3. The family home
4. Building the inn
5. Dougherty's fame
6. Write a question that you would like to ask James W. Dougherty
7. Now answer the question as you think he might answer